

## ***Additional Profiles for South Dakota Korean War-era Casualties For Whom There Was Limited Information Available***

### **Bates, Joseph Lorenzo**

Joseph Lorenzo Bates was born on June 24, 1930, at Huron, Beadle County, South Dakota to Luther and Mary Margaret Bates. Before he entered the service at 17, Joseph attended Huron High School. On September 19, 1951, Joseph entered active service. Airman First Class Joseph L. Bates died while in service to his country at Francis E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming on May 3, 1952.

### **Baxter, Wayne Floyd**

Wayne Floyd Baxter was born on February 5, 1951 at Millboro, Tripp County, South Dakota to Floyd and Ida (Krause) Baxter. Before he entered the service at 20, Wayne worked for Jackson Motor Company in Chicago, Illinois. On February 13, 1951, Wayne entered active service at Chicago, Illinois. Seaman Third Class Wayne F. Baxter died while in service to his country on May 2, 1952, at the U.S. Naval Air Facility at Glynco, Georgia. He is believed to be buried at the Winner Cemetery in Winner, South Dakota.

### **Black Tail Deer, Gerald**

Gerald Black Tail Dear is listed as from Shannon County in South Dakota. He was a private in the Marine Corps and died on August 15, 1951, at San Diego, California.

### **Blacksmith, Tilmer Henry**

Tilmer Henry Blacksmith was born on March 4, 1933, at Dupree, Ziebach County, South Dakota to Thomas Blacksmith and Ida (Black Elk-Blacksmith) Brave Heart. Before he entered the service, Tilmer was living at Oglala with his mother. On February 20, 1952, while still 17, Tilmer entered active service in the Marine Corps at Omaha, Nebraska. Blacksmith went overseas to Korea as part of Company E, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Marines, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division. Private First Class Tilmer H. Blacksmith was killed in action on July 8, 1953. Among his awards were the Purple Heart, the Combat Action Ribbon, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal and the Korean War Service Medal.

### **Blaine, Reginald**

Reginald Blaine is listed as from Charles Mix County in South Dakota. He was a private in the U.S. Army and died on June 26, 1953, at Smithville, New York.

### **Bredeson, Arlin**

Arlin S. Bredeson was born in Lake County, South Dakota to Andrew and Mabel Bredeson. He went to school in Rutland. He married Huberta Swenson and they had three children. As a member of the 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, Corporal Bredeson was taken prisoner of war while fighting the enemy in North Korea on December 1, 1950. Corporal Arlin S. Bredeson died while a prisoner of war on March 31, 1951. Among his awards were the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Prisoner of War Medal, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal and the National Defense Service Medal.

### Brown, Russell Dale

Russell Dale Brown was born July 18, 1923, at Electra, Texas to Joseph and Georgia Brown. His parents died in 1929 at Los Angeles. It is likely that he served in WW II. Russell married Helen Kinsman in Lincoln, Nebraska and they had two children, Stephen Russell and Cheryl Kay. From 1946 until 1951, they made their home in Watertown, South Dakota. Before he entered the service for the Korean War, Russell worked at North American Aircraft Company in Long Beach, California. He entered active service on April 18, 1951, at the Air Force Base at Long Beach. Airman Russell Dale Brown was killed in a plane crash off the coast of California near Santa Catalina on May 13, 1952.

### Conway, Thomas Patrick

Thomas Patrick Conway was born on January 2, 1922, to John and Margaret (Linnan) Conway at Sioux Falls, Minnehaha County, South Dakota. He went to school at the "Presentation Children's Home" and also attended Washington High School in Sioux Falls. He served in WW II from February 27, 1941, until August 8, 1945. Sergeant Thomas P. Conway was killed in action in the Korean War on September 6, 1950, as a member of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division. It is believed that his body was returned and buried at Long Beach, California. Among his awards were the Silver Star the Purple Heart, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean War Service Medal and the World War II Victory Medal.

### Cox, Roger Leon

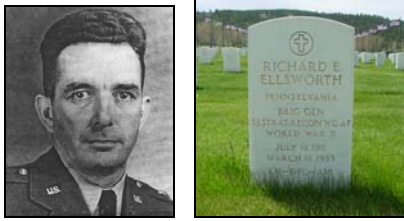


Roger Leon Cox was born November 9, 1932, at Hill City, Pennington County, South Dakota to Mr. and Mrs. Frank Cox. He had a brother, Robert, who was killed in action in Korea, and a sister Ilene, who married Lyle Woods, and lived in Denver, Colorado. Roger was raised and educated in Hill City. He worked as a carpenter before he entered the service. Roger joined the Navy in March of 1951, presumably around the time his brother, Robert, died aboard a hospital ship en route to the United States. On August 9, 1952, Navy AN Roger Leon Cox passed away at San Diego, California. His body was returned to the United States and he was buried with military honors at Black Hills National Cemetery near Sturgis, as was his brother, Robert.

### Davis, Ronald Warren

Ronald Warren Davis was born on April 25, 1933, at St. Paul, Minnesota, to Raymond and Ruth Ann Davis. Ronald lived most of his life as a resident of South Dakota. He went to high school for two years at Washington High School in Sioux Falls. Ronald enlisted and entered active service on May 1, 1950, at Sioux Falls and was trained with the 8<sup>th</sup> Cavalry at Fort Ord, California. Davis went overseas on October 16, 1950, with the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division. Corporal Ronald W. Davis was killed in action in Korea on July 14, 1951. Among his awards were the Purple Heart, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal and the Korean War Service Medal.

### Ellsworth, Richard Elmer



Richard Elmer Ellsworth was not a South Dakotan but is the namesake of the Ellsworth Air Force Base and is buried at Black Hills National Cemetery, so a brief sketch is included here. Brigadier General Ellsworth was assigned as Commander of the 28<sup>th</sup> Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, Rapid City Air Force Base. On March 18, 1953, while co-piloting a RB-36H all-weather bomber on a “simulated combat mission from Lajes, Azores to Rapid City,” Brigadier General Richard Ellsworth was killed when the aircraft “struck an 896-foot hill, killing all 23 on board.” Because it was one of the base’s worst peacetime tragedies, the base was later renamed in his honor; President Eisenhower attended the Dedication ceremony. Incidentally, two native South Dakotans were also killed in the crash: Captain Orien Clark and Major Frank Wright.

### Erickson, Robert Leonard

Robert Leonard Erickson was born May 26, 1928, at Logan, Hughes County, South Dakota, to Albert (Albin?) M. and Emma (Dahl) Erickson. He “had formerly lived in Crooks, but had lived in Sioux Falls with his sister and at the YMCA for about five years prior to his entry into the service.” His sisters in Sioux Falls were Mrs. John Ekberg, Mrs. Wayne Painter, and Mrs. Charles Gibson. Private Robert Leonard Erickson was killed in action in Korea on June 2, 1951, as part of the 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division and had been in Korea “less than six weeks” at the time of his death. He was also survived by his father and a brother, both in Alaska.

### Fields, Clyde Hale, Jr.

Clyde Hale “Shorty” Fields, Jr. was born May 29, 1924, at Wardell, Missouri, to Clyde Fields, Sr. and Mabel (Fields) Senger. He married his wife, Dorothy, in Yesilanti, Michigan, and they had two children: Ronnie Dean and Cathy Jean. While stationed at Lowry Air Force Base in Denver, on March 21, 1953, Sergeant Clyde Hale Fields died of injuries sustained in an automobile accident. He was buried at Fort Logan, Denver, Colorado. His mother, Mrs. Joseph (Mabel) Senger, was living in Rapid City at the time of his death.

### Fletcher, William R.

William R. Fletcher was born on September 6, 1925, at Hartington, Nebraska, to Raymond and Nettie Fletcher. He graduated from high school at Hartington, and first enlisted in the Army Air Force the same year, 1943. He later received his wings and commission at Childress Army Air Field in Texas. After being discharged, William married his wife, Marjorie Baker, in Sioux Falls in 1948. They had two children: Fredrick and Jacqueline. William graduated in 1949 from the University of South Dakota with a law degree. While living in Rapid City and being associated with Sunshine Mutual Insurance Company, Fletcher was recalled to duty with the 3917<sup>th</sup> AB Group, Weaver AFB, Rapid City, where he was part of the legal staff of the judge advocate general. In October of 1951, William’s family returned to Sioux Falls and Lt. Fletcher went overseas to England. On January 5, 1952, Lt. William R. Fletcher was killed “when a plane attempting to land crashed into a C-47 on which he was a passenger” at Burtonwood Air Base in England. His body was returned to the United States, and he was buried with military honors in Sioux Falls.

### Gange, Thomas W.

Thomas W. Gange is listed as from Brown County, South Dakota. He was a private first class in the U.S. Army and died February 3, 1953 at Denver, Colorado.

### Hutchinson, Ross Earl

This soldier does not appear on any original South Dakota casualty lists. The circumstances of his addition to the list are not known; he was presumably listed as a casualty of another state. On the American Battle Monuments Commission site, this information: Ross Earl Hutchinson was born on March 4, 1910. Mobridge, South Dakota is listed as his hometown. Hutchinson was a WW II veteran, according to the site. "In Korea, he [Sergeant First Class Hutchinson] was a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division. On September 2, 1950, near Shirdo, Korea, another soldier accidentally shot him as he left his foxhole." Among his awards were the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean War Service Medal and the World War II Victory Medal. He is buried at Fort Logan in Colorado.

### Jewett, Jack J.



Jack J. Jewett was born in Aberdeen, South Dakota, on January 28, 1926, to Mr. and Mrs. Harvey C. Jewett, Jr. Jack had a brother, Harvey III, and two sisters: Jane and Eleanor. Jack graduated from Campion Preparatory School, Prairie Du Chien, Wisconsin. Jack J. Jewett served in the Navy during World War II. After the war, Jack entered flight school to train as a Navy pilot. Just two weeks before receiving his wings and commission as a pilot, Air Cadet Jack J. Jewett was killed in a crash of a dive bomber at Corpus Christi, Texas. His body was returned to Aberdeen for a funeral service. Afterwards, his body was taken to Newark, Ohio, for burial in the family plot.

### Johnson, Herbert W.

Herbert W. Johnson was born on July 14, 1925, at Kannebec Township in Minnesota to Herbert J. and Louise (Hodgin) Johnson. Only briefly was Herbert in South Dakota; perhaps as few as ten months. Herbert went to Moorehead High School in Minnesota. He was likely a veteran of WW II. On December 11, 1947, Herbert was appointed a second lieutenant, Infantry Reserve. He married Mary Kay Sullivan on August 26, 1948, at Fargo, North Dakota; their daughter Kathryn Sue was born at Moorhead, Minnesota. He was ordered to active duty while he was temporarily working for Great Lakes Pipe Line Company in Sioux Falls. Johnson entered active service on October 1, 1950 at Fort Riley, Kansas, and went overseas on May 8, 1951. Just days after arriving, Lt. Herbert W. Johnson was killed in action in Korea as a member of Company A, 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment. Among his awards were the Purple Heart, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal and the Korean War Service Medal.

### Johnson, John Laverne



John "Bud" Laverne Johnson was born May 3, 1931, to Albert and Belva Johnson at LaPlant, Cheyenne Agency, South Dakota. He enlisted in the Marine Corps at Los Angeles, California, on July 27, 1948. He was with the First Marine Division and went to Korea from California on July 16, 1950. Private First Class John Laverne Johnson was killed in action in Korea on August 7, 1950. He was a member of Company G, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Marines, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division. Among his awards were the Purple Heart, the Combat Action Ribbon, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal and the Korean War Service Medal. He is officially listed as a casualty of California. In fact, it is believed his body was later returned and was buried Sunnyside Memorial Park, Long Beach, California.

### Jones, Raleigh R.



Raleigh Rushford Jones was born on May 30, 1933, at Hot Springs, South Dakota, to Harley and Mildred (Reaser) Jones. He went to high school for a time at Igloo before he entered the service. When he was 18, Raleigh was entered into the Army on February 6, 1952, at Sioux Falls. He was training as a paratrooper at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, as part of Company E, 504<sup>th</sup> Airborne Infantry, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division. While training as a rifleman, Private Jones earned his sharp shooter badge. After his basic training, he was allowed leave time. Private Raleigh R. Jones died in a car accident close to Hot Springs while on leave on December 6, 1952, ten months after entering the service. He was buried with military honors at Black Hills National Cemetery near Sturgis shortly after.

### Kautz, Edward

Edward William Kautz was born January 3, 1933, at Valley Springs, Minnehaha County, South Dakota to Otto and Emma (Busse) Kautz. He had three brothers and three sisters. After he completed his education at Valley Springs, Edward did farm work around the Valley Springs area before he entered the service. He joined the Air Force and entered active service on July 6, 1951. He was stationed at the Kwajalein Islands in the Marshall Island chain for three months during 1952. He returned to the United States on a furlough before being shipped to Korea. Airman Third Class Edward Kautz died of injuries received on September 13, 1953, when the car he was driving lost control and went off an embankment five miles east of Sioux Falls. He was buried with military honors at the Valley Springs Cemetery. He was 20 years old.

### Langston, Jack Clarence



Jack Clarence Langston was born on November 28, 1921, at Fairfax, Gregory County, South Dakota, to James C. and Neva (Swarner) Langston. He was a Captain in the U.S. Air Force

and was “a pilot of a F-84E Thunderjet fighter with the 136<sup>th</sup> Fighter bomber Wing.” Captain Jack Clarence Langston was killed in action on March 10, 1952, while strafing enemy positions on a combat mission. His aircraft took a direct hit by anti-aircraft fire, crashed, and exploded. At first he was listed as missing in action but on December 31, 1953, his status was changed to Presumed Dead. His body was not recovered. Among his awards were the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Commendation Ribbon, the Purple Heart, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal and the Korean War Service Medal.

#### Leighton, Clifford Laverne

Clifford Laverne Leighton was born January 12, 1926, at Mission, Todd County, South Dakota, to George and Philomene Leighton. Before he entered the service, Clifford farmed with his father. Clifford entered active service on November 14, 1947 in California, and went overseas as part of the Occupation forces, assigned to the 5<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division. Corporal Clifford L. Leighton was killed in action on July 25, 1950, in Korea. Among his awards were the Purple Heart, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal and the Korean War Service Medal.

#### Magill, Gordon F.

Gordon F. Magill was a native of Vail, Iowa, and perhaps never lived in South Dakota. He was listed as a South Dakota casualty because his sister, Mrs. Raymond Mill, was listed as his next of kin and she lived in Rapid City, South Dakota. Private First Class Gordon F. Magill died on July 8, 1951, at El Paso, Texas, when “the motorcycle on which he was a passenger struck a power pole.” At the time of his death, he had been in the service for three years and was attached to the Headquarters Battery of the 4052<sup>nd</sup> Army Service Unit at Fort Bliss.

#### Means, Gordon L.

Gordon L. Means is listed as from Lake County, South Dakota. He was Seaman in the U.S. Navy and died on August 9, 1952, at Okolona, Mississippi.

#### Mehess, Gus John

Gus John Mehess was born to John and Bessie Mehess. He came to South Dakota in 1934 and prior to entering the military was operating a café in Sioux Falls. He entered active service in June of 1940. He married Helen Van Demark of Hartford, South Dakota, in 1942. At some point, Lt. Col. Gus Mehess was assigned to duty at the Pentagon. In June of 1951, he was assigned to the Occupational duty with the 36<sup>th</sup> Fighter-Bomber Group in Germany. On March 7, 1952, Lieutenant Colonel Gus J. Mehess died in Bern, Switzerland, presumably in an aircraft-related accident. His widow was in (or returned to Hartford), and later that same year, her mother, Mrs. Henry Van Demark was killed in a car accident near Humbolt.

#### Mole, Harry Hardinger

Harry Hardinger Mole was born June 8, 1897. He was at some point a resident of Hughes County in South Dakota. Colonel Harry H. Mole died on November 23, 1953 at San Francisco, California, and was buried at Golden Gate National Cemetery.

#### Opp, Leslie Dean

Leslie Dean Opp, commonly called Dean, was born January 14, 1928, to Mr. and Mrs. Emil D. Opp. He graduated from Leola High School in 1946 and then the family moved to Walnut Creek,

California. Opp enlisted in the Army right after high school and was in the Occupation forces in Italy for much of his enlistment. He returned to the United States and was placed in the Reserves. Private Opp was called back to active duty in September of 1950 and shipped to Japan on January 2, 1951. On April 2, 1951, Private Leslie Dean Opp died "in a Japan hospital from severe head injuries." His body was returned to the United States, and is buried at San Francisco National Cemetery in California.

#### Prue, Robert Francis

Robert Francis Prue was born May 30, 1924 at O'Kreek, Todd County, South Dakota, to Frank and Sophie Prue. Robert was educated at the St. Francis Indian School. He first served his country overseas during WW II between July 23, 1942 and September 5, 1945. He then returned to South Dakota and the O'Kreek area where he was intermittently employed; at one time he worked at the Black Hills Ordnance Depot at Igloo. Robert re-enlisted in the service in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1949. He is believed to have gone overseas around July 6, 1950, as part of Company G, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division. On December 15, 1950, Sergeant First Class Robert Francis Prue was declared missing in action. On December 31, 1953, the designation was changed to presumed dead. His body was not recovered. Among his awards were the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal and the Korean War Service Medal.

#### Red Paint, Noah

Noah Red Paint was born October 20, 1927, at Pine Ridge, Shannon County, South Dakota to Alfred Red Paint and Edna (Red Paint) Soldier Hawk. Noah went to school at the No. 5 Day School in Oglala. Noah first entered the service in January of 1948 at Fort Warren, Wyoming, and served overseas from August of 1949 until November of 1951. After he returned to the United States, Red Paint reenlisted at Fort Sill in Oklahoma. On June 3, 1953, Private Noah Red Paint died at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

#### Roessner, Ernest E.

Ernest Roessner was born on April 20, 1914, to Gus and Marie Roessner. The family lived in the Lucas community, Gregory County, South Dakota for a time. Ernest graduated from Lucas High School. Roessner entered the Marine Corps on August 29, 1934, and served overseas in WW II. After the war he stayed in the Marine Corps and reached the rank of Master Sergeant. On September 24, 1950, Marine Corps Master Sergeant Ernest Roessner, a member of Company H, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division, was killed in action in Korea. His body was later returned to the United States, and he was buried at Fort Rosencrans National Cemetery in California.

#### Schmieding, John I.

John I. Schmieding was born October 2, 1926, at Ipswich, Edmunds County, South Dakota, to Christian and Mary Schmieding. He was raised in the Orient area of Hand County. Before he was drafted into the Army, John farmed with his father near Orient. On November 24, 1952, John entered active service at Sioux Falls. Schmieding went overseas on April 29, 1953 as part of Detachment A, 43<sup>rd</sup> Engineers Battalion, which was a construction outfit. Private First Class Schmieding was wounded in battle in Korea in the summer of 1953 and had spent a good deal of time in the hospital. On May 15, 1954, Pfc. John I. Schmieding was killed as a passenger in a Jeep that was delivering mail at Camp Bender, Japan.



### Thunder Horse, Roland

Roland Thunder Horse was born on June 27, 1933, at Greenwood, Charles Mix County, South Dakota, to Charles Thunder Horse and Helen (Thunder Horse) Little Owl. Roland was 17 when he enlisted in the Army. On August 28, 1948, he entered active service at Fort Crook, Nebraska, and became part of the 65<sup>th</sup> Engineers, Heavy Shop Company, stationed at San Francisco, California, and went overseas as part of the Occupation forces stationed in Okinawa and transferred to Korea with the beginning of the war. Private First Class Roland Thunder Horse was killed in Korea on November 1, 1951.

### Uilk, Wilmer E.

Wilmer E. Uilk is listed as from Minnehaha County, South Dakota. He was Fireman in the U.S. Navy and died on June 18, 1952, in Hawaii.

### Valder, Lester Alvin

Lester Alvin Valder was born on May 22, 1911, at Frankfort, Spink County, South Dakota. The son of Adam John Valder, Lester was raised and educated in the Frankfort area. Before he entered the service, he did farm work around Frankfort. On October 19, 1933, Lester joined the Navy at Council Bluffs, Iowa, and served overseas during World War II. He married Edna Horate on May 20, 1942, in Lancaster, Missouri. After the war, he stayed in the Navy. Ship's Serviceman Second Class Lester A. Valder served overseas during the Korean War aboard the *USS Montrose* from December 1950 to August of 1951. A year later, on August 15, 1952, SHC Lester Valder died in San Diego, California. He was buried at Fort Rosencrans National Cemetery in San Diego.

### Winiecki, Gene LeRoy



Gene LeRoy Winiecki was born March 13, 1932, at Portage, Wisconsin to John and Wilma Winiecki. At some point Gene moved to Huron, South Dakota, where Gene attended high school. He was also a member of the South Dakota National Guard. Winiecki went overseas as part of the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. Corporal Gene L. Winiecki was killed in action on August 11, 1950. His body was later returned to the United States and he was buried at Quincy National Cemetery in Illinois. Among his awards were the Purple Heart, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal and the Korean War Service Medal.

### Yelkey, Bill E.



Bill E. Yelkey was born circa 1932 at Fremont, Nebraska, to Charles and Esther Yelkey. Although he was raised and educated in Fremont, he lived in Sioux Falls, South Dakota for four months before entering the service. Stationed at Fort Eustis, Virginia, Private First Class Bill E. Yelkey died of head injuries on August 1, 1951, after he was knocked down at Newport News, Virginia. He was survived by his parents, a brother, and two sisters. Pfc. Yelkey was buried at Fremont, Nebraska.